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Fulbright Anniversary

Twenty years ago today, President Truman signed the Fulbright Act. The spectacular growth and success of our educational exchange programs since the modest beginning of 1946 are a monument not only to the Senator who brought them into being but to the able administrators who have given them such sensitive leadership. This is the anniversary of a brilliant idea which has been nurtured over the years with unusual care and effect.

One way to quantify an assessment of the first twenty years of our exchange efforts would be to cite the numbers of those directly involved. Thus, 14,174 students have gone abroad from the United States on Fulbright grants and 33,220 have come here; 11,136 teachers and lecturers have taught in foreign institutions, and 12,070 have come to this country. But this would be a most misleading and inadequate measure. It is in their multiplying secondary and indirect effects that the special virtue of educational exchanges rests. The 12,070 foreign Fulbright teachers have reached an estimated 311,725 U.S. students. And U.S. teachers back from overseas have touched the lives of some 3.2 million students passing through elementary and secondary schools.

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